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February 9, 2023

Senator Melony Griffith, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 214 – UNFAVORABLE – Employment – Harassment and Intimidation – Reporting (Workplace Psychological Safety Act)

Dear Chair Griffith and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Asphalt Association (MAA) is comprised of 18 producer members representing more than 47 production facilities, 24 contractor members, 24 consulting engineer firms and 41 other associate members. MAA works proactively with regulatory agencies to represent the interests of the asphalt industry both in the writing and interpretation of state and federal regulations that may affect our members. We also advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland's multimodal transportation system.

Senate Bill 214 establishes a new standard for workplace "harassment and intimidation" within the Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Act, along with additional reporting requirements for violations of those standards and an anonymous tip line to investigate allegations of such violations.

MAA takes any allegations of workplace harassment and intimidation seriously, and we are committed to maintaining workplaces where employees feel safe, appreciated, and free to speak their minds about any issues they may experience or witness. Our opposition to Senate Bill 214, then, lies not with the goal of making psychological safety as important in the workplace as physical safety, but with the way the bill goes about achieving this laudable goal. The language used throughout Senate Bill 214 is vague, overly broad, and potentially confusing for human resources personnel to implement. In addition, most of the new directives that would be required are already things that workplaces generally need to do or have in place because of federal workplace safety laws and regulations. The addition of state-level rules in this sector is unnecessarily duplicative.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our request for an UNFAVORABLE report on Senate Bill 214.

Sincerely,

Marshall Klinefelter
President
Maryland Asphalt Association